



Roosevelt
Institute for
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Studies

Invitation

Roosevelt Environmental History
Lecture by Maarten Zwiers
Friday, 4 October 2024



Maarten Zwiers is assistant professor of History and American Studies and researcher of Low Saxon Language and Culture at the University of Groningen. His work focuses on rural histories and cultures, in particular the United States South and the Northeast of the Netherlands.



THE MEANING OF WETLANDS

LECTURER Maarten Zwiers

DATE Friday 4 October 2024 at 4:00-6:00 p.m. The doors open at 3.30 p.m.

LOCATION RIAS, Hofplein 16, 4331CK Middelburg

What is the meaning of wetlands? Throughout history, humans more often than not considered wetlands like swamps, fens, and bogs as obnoxious and hostile spaces. “Drain the swamp” has even become a political slogan.

In this Environmental History Lecture, historian and Americanist Maarten Zwiers delves into the various manifestations of the marsh and its representation in movies, literature, and politics. From Het Zwin in Zeeuws Vlaanderen to the swamps in the Deep South of the United States and onward to the peat fields in the North of the Netherlands, we discover how wetlands mean different things to different organisms, both human and other-than-human.

While antebellum planters in the U.S. South saw marshlands as obstacles to progress and profit, swamps offered refuge to those escaping the plantation system. The swamp can be many things: a dystopia that needs to be drained, a symbol of chaos and decay, but also an important agent in the fight against global warming and a site of resistance and rebellion against enslavement and extraction.

**To attend the lecture, please register
(by Wednesday 25 September 2024) [here](#).**



This lecture is sponsored by the



Roosevelt Institute for American Studies

Hofplein 16

P.O. Box 70

4330 AB Middelburg

T +31(0)118 678 836

E info@roosevelt.nl

www.roosevelt.nl

